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THE ASCENDING CYCLE.

THE teaching of the Secret Doctrine divides the period during which human evolution proceeds upon this globe into seven periods. During the first three-and-a-half of these, the ethereal humanity who appeared in the First Race gradually become material in form, and the psychic spirituality of the inner man is transformed into intellectuality. During the remaining three-and-a-half periods, there is a gradual dematerialization of form; the inner man by slow degrees rises from mere brain intellection to a more perfected spiritual consciousness. We are told that there are correspondences between the early and later periods of evolution; the old conditions are repeated, but upon higher planes; we re-achieve the old spirituality with added wisdom and intellectual power. Looked at in this way we shall find that the Seventh Race corresponds to the First; the Sixth to the Second; and the Fifth Race (which is ours) corresponds with the Third. "We are now approaching a time," says the Secret Doctrine, "when the pendulum of evolution will direct its swing decidedly upward, bringing humanity back on a parallel line with the primitive Third Root Race in spirituality." That is, there will be existing on the earth, about the close of Fifth Race, conditions in some way corresponding with those prevailing when the Third Race men began their evolution. Though this period may be yet distant hundreds of thousands of years, still it is of interest to forecast that future as far as may be, for the future is concealed in the present, and is the outcome of forces working to-day. We may find out from this enquiry the true nature of movements like the Theosophical Society.

One of the most interesting passages in the Secret Doctrine is that which describes the early Third Race. "It was not a Race, this progeny. It was at first a wondrous Being, called the 'Initiator,' and after him a group of semi-divine and semi-human beings." Without at all attempting to explain the real nature of this mysterious Being or Race, we may assume that one of the things hinted at is the consciousness of united being possessed by these ancient Adepts. Walking abroad over the earth as instructors of a less progressed humanity,

their wisdom and power had a common root. They taught truth from a heart-perception of life, ever fresh and eternal, everywhere prevailing nature and welling up in themselves. This heart-perception is the consciousness of unity of inner being. The pendulum of evolution which in its upward swing will bring humanity backwards on a parallel line with the primitive Third Root Race, should bring back something corresponding to this primeval hierarchy of divine sages. We should see at the end of the Kaliyuga a new brotherhood formed from those who have risen out of material life and aims, who have conquered self, who have been purified by suffering, who have acquired strength and wisdom, and who have wakened up to the old magical perception of their unity in true Being. "At the end of the Kali, our present age, Vishnu, or the 'Everlasting King,' will appear as Kalki, and establish righteousness upon earth. The minds of those who live at that time shall be awakened and become pellucid as crystal."—(Secret Doctrine, II., 483.)

Passing beyond the turning point of evolution, where the delusion of separateness is complete, and moving on to that future awaiting us in infinite distances, when the Great Breath shall cease its outward motion and we shall merge into the One—on this uphill journey in groups and clusters men will first draw closer together, entering in spirit their own parent rays before being united in the source of all light and life. Such a brotherhood of men and women we may expect will arise, conscious in unity, thinking from one mind and acting from one soul. All such great achievements of the race are heralded long before by signs which those who study the lives of men may know. There is a gestation in the darkness of the womb before the living being appears. Ideals first exist in thought, and from thought they are outrealized into objective existence. The Theosophical Society was started to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, and its trend is towards this ideal. May we not justifiably suppose that we are witnessing to-day in this movement the birth of a new race corresponding to the divine Initiators of the Third; a race which shall in its inner life be truly a "Wondrous Being." I think we will perform our truest service to the Society by regarding it in this way as an actual entity whose baby years and mystical childhood we should foster. There are many people who know that it is possible by certain methods to participate in the soul-life of a co-worker, and if it is possible to do this even momentarily with one comrade, it is possible so to participate in the vaster life of great movements. There will come a time to all who have devoted themselves to this ideal, as H. P. Blavatsky and some others have done, when they will enter into the inner life of this great Being, and share the hopes, the aspirations, the heroism, and the failures which must be brought about when so many men and women are working together. To achieve this we should continually keep in mind this sense of unity; striving also to rise in meditation until we sense in the vastness the beating of these innumerable hearts glowing with heroic purpose: we should try to humanize our mysticism; "We can only reach the Universal Mind through the minds of humanity," and we can penetrate into their minds by continual concentration, endeavouring to realise their thoughts and feelings, until we carry always about with us in imagination, as Walt Whitman, "those delicious burdens, men and women."

G. W. R.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. W. B. YEATS.

A FEW evenings ago I called on my friend, Mr. W. B. Yeats, and found him alone, seated in his arm-chair, smoking his cigarette, with a volume of Homer before him. The whole room indicated the style and taste peculiar to its presiding genius. Upon the walls hung various designs by Blake and other less well-known symbolic artists; everywhere books and papers, in apparently endless profusion.

In his usual genial way he invited me to have a cup of tea with him. During this pleasant ceremony little was said, but sufficient to impress me more than ever with the fact that my host was supremely an artist, much in love with his art. With a passion deep and entrancing he adores his art: "his bread is from her lips; his exhilaration from the taste of her." The Muse finds in him a tongue to respond to her most subtle beauties. In song was handed down the great Solar Religions that advanced the people of antiquity; in song those of a later day received that which caused them to emerge from their cold isolation and kiss "the warm lips of Helios"; and in these days, too, we look to the poets for that inspiration which will

"Overflow mankind with true desires,
And guide new Ages on by flights of living lyres."

Tea over, I disclosed the object of my visit. "Mr. Yeats," I said, "I understand that you saw a great deal of Madame Blavatsky in the earlier days of the Theosophical movement in England, and so I thought you might have something to say regarding her, which would interest the readers of the IRISH THEOSOPHIST."

"Yes," replied Mr. Yeats, "I had the privilege of seeing Madame Blavatsky frequently at that time, and so many interesting little incidents crowd in upon me, that I find some difficulty in selecting what might be most interesting to your readers."

"Well," I replied, "suppose you begin by giving your personal impressions."

"Madame Blavatsky," said Mr. Yeats, "struck me as being a very strong character. In her ordinary moods, rather combative, and inclined to rub people's prejudices the other way. When depressed, she dropped her combativeness, and, thrown back on herself, as it were, became most interesting, and talked about her own life. A clever American, who was not a Theosophist, said to me once: 'Madame Blavatsky has become the most famous woman in the whole world, by sitting in her arm-chair, and getting people to talk to her.'"

"I have heard it stated," said I, "in connection with the Coloumb incidents, that Madame Blavatsky showed great lack of insight into character."

"For so powerful a personality," replied Mr. Yeats, "she did seem to lack something in that respect. I remember, for instance, on one occasion she introduced me to a French occultist, whom she spoke of very highly, and even urged me to read his books. Within a short time he was expelled from the Society for what appeared excellent reasons. 'I have had to expel him,' said Madame Blavatsky to me; 'he sold a love elixir for two francs; had it been forty francs I might have overlooked the fact.' On another occasion she told me, quite seriously, that I would have a severe illness within six months, and I am waiting for that illness still. Attempts are made by people very often,"

continued Mr. Yeats, "to wash humanity out of their leaders. Madame Blavatsky made mistakes; she was human, and to me that fact makes her, if possible, the more interesting. Another peculiarity was her evident lack of proportion. An attack on the Theosophical movement (she did not seem to mind personal attacks) in some obscure little paper, was to her of as much importance as if it appeared in the *Times*."

In reply to another question, Mr. Yeats remarked that she had met Demussét a few times, and Balzac once. She had worked a little at occultism with George Sands, but, to use her own words, both were "mere dabblers" at the time.

"What did you think of Madame Blavatsky as a talker?" I asked.

"It has been said of Dr. Johnson," replied Mr. Yeats, "that the effeminate reader is repelled by him; and the same might be said of Madame Blavatsky as a talker. She had that kind of faculty which repelled the weak, and attracted those of a stronger temperament. She hated paradox, and yet she gave utterance to the most magnificent paradox I ever heard."

"As you heard her talk a good deal, perhaps you will kindly relate to me any interesting sayings that occur to you," said I.

"With pleasure," replied Mr. Yeats, lighting another cigarette. "I called on Madame Blavatsky one day, with a friend—a T. C. D. man. She was trying to explain to us the nature of the Akas, and was entering into an exceedingly subtle metaphysical analysis of the difference between fore-knowledge and predestination—a problem which has interested theologians of ancient, as well as modern times—showing the way in which the whole question was mixed up with the question of the Akas, when suddenly she broke off—my friend not following, and said, turning round, and pointing to one of her followers who was present: 'You with your spectacles and your impudence, you will be sitting there in the Akas to all eternity—no not to all eternity, for a day will come when even the Akas will pass away, and then there shall be nothing but God—Chaos—that which every man is seeking in his heart.'"

"At another time, when I called, she seemed rather depressed. 'Ah!' she said, 'there is no solidarity among the good; there is only solidarity among the evil. There was a time when I used to blame and pity the people who sold their souls to the devil, now I only pity them; I know why they do it; they do it to have somebody on their side.' 'As for me I write, write, write, as the Wandering Jew walks, walks, walks.'"

"On one occasion, too," said Mr. Yeats, continuing, "she referred to the Greek Church as the church of her childhood, saying: 'The Greek Church, like all true religions, was a triangle, but it spread out and became a bramble bush, and that is the Church of Rome; then they came and lopped off the branches, and turned it into a broomstick, and that is Protestantism.'"

In reply to a question, Mr. Yeats said, quoting her own words, with reference to Col. Olcott: "Ah! *he* is an honest man; *I* am an old Russian savage"; and, referring to Mr. Old, she said, with a hearty enthusiasm that, in certain respects, he was above all those about her at that time.

"Can you remember anything in the nature of a prophecy, Mr. Yeats, made by Madame Blavatsky, that might be of interest to record, notwithstanding the fact that you are yet awaiting your prophesied illness?" I asked.

"The only thing of that nature," replied Mr. Yeats, "was a reference to England." "The Master told me," said she, "that the power of England would not outlive the century, and the Master never deceived me."

"I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Yeats," said I, "for the kind manner in which you have responded to my enquiries regarding Madame Blavatsky; perhaps you will pardon me if I ask you one or two questions about your own work now. Do you intend, at any time, publishing a book on 'Mysticism'?"

"Yes; at no very distant date I hope to publish a work dealing with mystics I have seen, and stories I have heard, but it will be as an artist, not as a controversialist."

"And what about your present work?" I asked.

"'Celtic Twilight,' a work dealing with ghosts, goblins, and faeries, will be out shortly; also a small selection of 'Blake's Poems,'" he replied. "Then, I am getting ready for publication, next spring, a book of poems, which I intend calling, 'The Wind among the Reeds'; and, as soon afterwards as possible, a collection of essays, and lectures dealing with Irish nationality and literature, which will probably appear under the title of the 'Watch Fire.'"

After due apologies for my intrusion, I bade my host good evening, and withdrew feeling more than satisfied with the result of my interview.

Mr. Yeats has often been spoken of as a dreamer, and many strange stories are afloat which go a long way to bear out such a statement. But, in my opinion, he combines the man of thought with the man of action; he is "whole of heart and sound of head," and Ireland may, indeed, be proud of one who promises to rank among her most worthy sons.

D. N. D.

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THEOSOPHY AND COMMERCE.

THERE is a disposition in certain quarters to look upon the Esoteric Philosophy as something altogether outside the sphere of the average man of business; and, to an extent, Theosophists are themselves responsible for this. When asked an innocent question upon some ethical subject, or invited to explain our position upon such a problem of universal interest, say as evolution, we are apt to overwhelm the questioner with an elaborate disquisition, full of Sanskrit words, which are utterly meaningless to him, and he goes away with the idea that Theosophy is an Oriental jumble, unsuitable for sensible matter-of-fact Britons. On the other hand, there are many students who look upon Commerce as a sort of necessary evil to be barely tolerated, and those engaged in it as the inheritors of unfortunate Karma, whose daily life unfits them for deep spiritual experiences, and from whom it is useless to expect a real application of the high morality necessary to occult development.

As a business man, fully alive to the enormous amount of human thought now necessarily devoted to commercial matters in our "nation of shopkeepers," I venture to think it may be a useful enquiry to consider—first, what we may take to be the relation of Theosophy to Commerce; and secondly, what are its advantages over other systems of thought, likely to attract men of business who possess some desire to satisfy the demands of their intellectual and spiritual nature?

Competent critics have declared that the secret of England's greatness is the intense selfishness and energy of her merchants. It is undoubtedly true that the growth of the British Empire is largely due to these and similar characteristics, which will assuredly dominate the great Anglo-Saxon race for many years to come. One of the most striking facts noticed by every serious student of history is that where races or nations have developed particular features of character, which differentiates them from other ethnical groups of humanity, it has invariably been at the expense of other qualities equally important in forming the perfect man. Ancient Mexico and Peru, and the long chapters of Chinese history, are conspicuous examples of an advanced civilisation progressing side by side with the grossest superstition, and an utter disregard of the sanctity of human life. In England, on the other hand, may be traced a remarkable colonising and industrial spirit, but a general neglect of those vast problems of life which lie beyond the domain of materialistic science. The Western world is just discovering how little it knows of psychology and cognate subjects, which to the Eastern mind has been the most attractive field for study during long ages. It is the especial mission of Theosophy to demonstrate the supreme importance of these subjects in order to secure a rational and philosophical basis for conduct, and the next century will probably immortalise many Western devotees of the sciences connected with mind and spirit, as deservedly as the nineteenth has placed the names of Darwin and Huxley in a permanent niche of fame.

In England—and the same would be true of America—our existence is centred around the industrial and commercial energy of the people—and the great majority of men pass their lives amid a competitive system of the most exacting nature. It is in the constant efforts to provide new markets for the output of our great seats of production that Western habits are primarily carried into distant lands. It must be confessed that the existing war of tariffs, and the severe international competition in the markets of the world, do not favour the early realisation of that universal Brotherhood among men and nations, which is the first object of the Theosophical Society, cosmopolitan societies and congresses notwithstanding. We did something by throwing open English markets to the world fifty years ago; but the entire system of international exchange must be largely modified, and business men must learn to recognise the rights of their fellows, without distinction, before we may hope to see a real Brotherhood of Humanity become an accomplished fact. I believe the gradual abolition of monopolies and restrictive tariffs will do much in this direction; but this is a matter for the economist and statesman.

The fact that what are regarded as necessities of life are found distributed over so many lands points to the wisdom of unrestricted interchange of commodities among nations, and to the occult truth that we are all a part of the One Life, affected not merely by our own small environment, and the life of our community, but actually related on all planes with men of every race, creed and colour. Nature supplies us with a better code of morals than the churches in this, as in other matters.

Unfortunately, competition is not confined to nations, but at home we have the same internicine war—London fighting Manchester; Leeds opposed to Bradford; and Southampton pitted against Liverpool—while the struggle between

Newcastle, Belfast and Glasgow, shows what a really United Kingdom we are! The same applies to smaller areas, where large capitalists and co-operative societies are making the small tradesman a mere fly on the wheel. How like vipers in a barrel—seeing who can get his head uppermost! The awful *waste* in such a system must be apparent to everyone—not merely a material waste, but including the very health and character of the people.

(*To be continued.*)

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THE MEDITATION OF PARVATI.

PARVATI rose up from his seat under the banyan tree. He passed his hand unsteadily over his brow. Throughout the day the young ascetic had been plunged in profound meditation, and now, returning from heaven to earth, he was dazed like one who awakens in darkness and knows not where he is. All day long before his inner eye burned the light of the Lokas, until he was wearied and exhausted with their splendours: space glowed like a diamond with intolerable lustre, and there was no end to the dazzling processions of figures. He had seen the fiery dreams of the dead in Swargam. He had been tormented by the sweet singing of the Gandharvas, whose choral song reflected in its ripples the rhythmic pulse of Being. He saw how the orbs, which held them, were set within luminous orbs of still wider circuit, and vaster and vaster grew the vistas, and smaller seemed the soul at gaze, until at last, a mere speck of life, he bore the burden of innumerable worlds. Seeking for Brahma, he found only the great illusion as infinite as Brahma's being.

If these things were shadows, the earth and the forests he returned to, viewed at evening, seemed still more unreal, the mere dusky flutter of a moth's wings in space. Filmy and evanescent, if he had sunk down as through a transparency into the void, it would not have been wonderful. Parvati turned homeward, still half in trance: as he threaded the dim alleys he noticed not the flaming eyes that regarded him from the gloom; the serpents rustling amid the undergrowths; the lizards, fire-flies, insects, the innumerable lives of which the Indian forest was rumourous; they also were but shadows. He paused half unconsciously at the village, hearing the sound of human voices, of children at play. He felt a throb of pity for these tiny beings who struggled and shouted, rolling over each other in ecstasies of joy; the great illusion had indeed devoured them before whom the Devas once were worshippers. Then close beside him he heard a voice; its low tones, its reverence soothed him: there was something akin to his own nature in it; it awakened him fully. A little crowd of five or six people were listening silently to an old man who read from a palm-leaf manuscript. Parvati knew his order by the orange-coloured robes he wore; a Bhikshu of the new faith. What was his delusion?

The old man lifted his head for a moment as the ascetic came closer, and then he continued as before. He was reading the "Legend of the Great King of Glory." Parvati listened to it, comprehending with the swift intuition and subtlety of a mystic the inner meaning of the Wonderful Wheel, the Elephant Treasure, the Lake and Palace of Righteousness. He followed the speaker,

understanding all until he came to the meditation of the King : then he heard with vibrating heart, how "the Great King of Glory entered the golden chamber, and set himself down on the silver couch. And he let his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love ; and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around and everywhere, did he continue to pervade with heart of Love, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure." When the old Bhikshu had ended, Parvati rose up, and went back again into the forest. He had found the secret of the True—to leave behind the vistas, and enter into the Being. Another legend rose up in his mind, a fairy legend of righteousness, expanding and filling the universe, a vision beautiful and full of old enchantment ; his heart sang within him. He seated himself again under the banyan tree ; he rose up in soul ; he saw before him images, long-forgotten, of those who suffer in the sorrowful old earth ; he saw the desolation and loneliness of old age, the insults to the captive, the misery of the leper and outcast, the chill horror and darkness of life in a dungeon. He drank in all their sorrow. From his heart he went out to them. Love, a fierce and tender flame arose ; pity, a breath from the vast ; sympathy, born of unity. This triple fire sent forth its rays ; they surrounded those dark souls ; they pervaded them ; they beat down oppression.

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While Parvati, with spiritual magic, sent forth the healing powers, far away at that moment, in his hall, a king sat enthroned. A captive was bound before him ; bound, but proud, defiant, unconquerable of soul. There was silence in the hall until the king spake the doom, the torture, for this ancient enemy. The king spake : "I had thought to do some fierce thing to thee, and so end thy days, my enemy. But, I remember with sorrow, the great wrongs we have done to each other, and the hearts made sore by our hatred. I shall do no more wrong to thee. Thou art free to depart. Do what thou wilt. I will make restitution to thee as far as may be for thy ruined state." Then the soul no might could conquer was conquered, and the knees were bowed ; his pride was overcome. "My brother !" he said, and could say no more.

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To watch for years a little narrow slit high up in the dark cell, so high that he could not reach up and look out ; and there to see daily a little change from blue to dark in the sky had withered that prisoner's soul. The bitter tears came no more ; hardly even sorrow ; only a dull, dead feeling. But that day a great groan burst from him : he heard outside the laugh of a child who was playing and gathering flowers under the high, grey walls : then it all came over him, the divine things missed, the light, the glory, and the beauty that the earth puts forth for her children. The narrow slit was darkened : half of a little bronze face appeared.

"Who are you down there in the darkness who sigh so ? Are you all alone there ? For so many years ! Ah, poor man ! I would come down to you if I could, but I will sit here and talk to you for a while. Here are flowers for you," and a little arm showered them in handfuls ; the room was full of the intoxicating fragrance of summer. Day after day the child came, and the dull heart entered into human love once more.

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At twilight, by a deep and wide river, sat an old woman alone, dreamy, and full of memories. The lights of the swift passing boats, and the lights of the stars, were just as in childhood and the old love-time. Old, feeble, it was time for her to hurry away from the place which changed not with her sorrow.

"Do you see our old neighbour there?" said Ayesha to her lover. "They say she once was as beautiful as you would make me think I am now. How lonely she must be! Let us come near and speak to her"; and the lover went gladly. Though they spoke to each other rather than to her, yet something of the past—which never dies when love, the immortal, has pervaded it—rose up again as she heard their voices. She smiled, thinking of years of burning beauty.

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A teacher, accompanied by his chelas, was passing by the wayside where a leper was sitting. The teacher said, "Here is our brother whom we may not touch. But he need not be shut out from truth. We may sit down where he can listen." He sat down on the wayside beside the leper, and his chelas stood around him. He spoke words full of love, kindness, and pity, the eternal truths which make the soul grow full of sweetness and youth. A small old spot began to glow in the heart of the leper, and the tears ran down his withered cheeks.

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All these were the deeds of Parvati, the ascetic; and the Watcher who was over him from all eternity made a great stride towards that soul.

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TO A POET.

Oh, be not led away,
Lured by the colour of the sun-rich day.
The gay romance of song
Unto the spirit-life doth not belong.
Though far-between the hours
In which the Master of Angelic Powers
Lightens the dusk within
The Holy of Holies; be it thine to win
Rare vistas of white light,
Half-parted lips, through which the Infinite
Murmurs her ancient story;
Harkening to whom the wandering planets hoary
Waken primeval fires,
With deeper rapture in celestial choirs
Breathe, and with fleeter motion
Wheel in their orbits through the surgeless ocean.
So, hearken thou like these,
Intent on her, mounting by slow degrees,
Until thy song's elation
Echoes her multitudinous meditation.

G. W. R.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "IRISH THEOSOPHIST."

"DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—I am inclined to think that your correspondent, 'Not ashamed of my Conviction,' who writes in your October number, is perhaps under a misunderstanding, though, as he does not specify any particular instance of supposed dogmatism, I cannot be sure of this. None the less, I imagine the position of affairs to be somewhat as follows:—Many members of the T.S. are convinced of the existence of Masters of Wisdom, and expressly state their conviction, in which they are quite right, of course; but if pressed for the grounds of their belief, they decline to give them. On the other hand, many other members are equally convinced of Masters' existence; they also expressly declare that conviction, and are prepared to state the grounds upon which they hold such belief. They may be unjust in saying that the other members are dogmatic, though certainly the first of the above-named positions certainly would bear that construction, especially in the eyes of beginners in the study of Theosophy. Now my object in writing, Mr. Editor, is to suggest that there are many valid reasons for believing in the existence of Masters; and that these reasons are such as to be easily and simply stated, and I hope that those who feel impelled to proclaim the existence of Masters will bear in mind that a mere assertion of conviction, unsupported by any grounds of belief, is likely to repel many enquirers, who would be quite willing and able to appreciate the reasons for the belief. I will give what I consider ample reasons for my conviction, which I insist upon, whenever opportunity arises, both in public and private.

First, then, everybody believes in evolution in some shape or other, and must readily admit that he himself is not its highest product; further, he will as readily admit that he knows no one who would comply with his own requirements as the highest possible present product of evolution. Then he must admit that the possibility of Masters' existence is to be conceded? Yes.

Secondly, comes the marshalling of the evidence that they do exist, and this naturally falls under the heads of (a) evidence that appeals to us directly, and (b) evidence consisting of the testimony of others. Under (a) we have the Esoteric Philosophy as a whole as presented most completely in the 'Secret Doctrine.' If Madame Blavatsky's claim is true, and I believe it is, that the Philosophy there expounded, though admittedly only a fragment, dealing with more of the subjects with which philosophical minds are occupied than any other system of philosophy (and this fact, be it noted, is entirely independent of anyone's agreement or disagreement with the conclusions therein promulgated) was taught to her by Masters. Now if her claim be true, Masters exist; if it be not true, she invented it, and was therefore herself a Master, as she has admittedly promulgated the most comprehensive system of Philosophy known; a performance far transcending the powers of any previous philosopher's intellect. Under (b) comes the testimony of Madame Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, and many others, who testify, among other things, to having met in the flesh men whom they had known by sight previously, through the medium of appearances in other than physical bodies, and who, in both states, satisfied our witnesses as to their identity by teaching portions of the Esoteric Philosophy.

In conclusion, let me appeal to all who are earnestly striving to spread Theosophical teachings, to give, when possible, some ground for the assertions they feel called upon to make. Assertion, by itself, is often insufficient as an appeal to many intelligent minds; backed up by reasons for the faith that is in us, it is more likely to be of benefit to the Cause, to enquirers, and to ourselves.

Again, having these firm convictions, will it not be well for us to assert them, to do the work they prompt us to do with all our might and main, so as to leave as little time as may be for the criticism of others' methods?"—Yours fraternally,

O. FIRTH.

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REVIEWS.

*Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and the Secret Doctrine.** By Countess Wachtmeister and others. As, one after another, stories of H. P. Blavatsky are related by those who were associated with her in her life-work, we begin to form some slight conception of her mystic personality. Her story, in its romantic interest merely, is unsurpassed by any in history or fiction. This little book will deepen the interest already felt. Students of occult science will find in the account of how the "Secret Doctrine" was written many a hint on occult practice. Here is H. P. B.'s own description of her method: "I make what I can only describe as a sort of vacuum in the air before me, and fix my sight and my will upon it, and soon scene after scene passes before me like the successive pictures of a diorama; or, if I need a reference or information from some book, I fix my mind intently, and the astral counterpart of the book appears, and from it I take what I need." Here is another quotation which shows how the deepest insight justifies and necessitates the highest Ethics. Let those listen who criticise her action with regard to her enemies; being worldly-wise let them hear diviner wisdom, and deeper charity. It was a matter for scoffing that H. P. B., the clairvoyant, could not tell her friends from her foes. "Who am I," she said, "that I should deny a chance to one in whom I see a spark still glimmering of recognition of the cause I serve, that might yet be fanned into a flame of devotion? What matter the consequences that fall on me personally when such an one fails, succumbing to the forces of evil within him: though in his fall he cover me with misrepresentation, obloquy, and scorn? What right have I to refuse to anyone the chance of profiting by the truths I can teach him, and thereby entering upon the path? I tell you I have no choice. I am pledged by the laws of occultism to a renunciation of selfish considerations, and how can I dare to assume the existence of faults in a candidate, and act upon my assumption even though a cloudy forbidding aura may fill me with misgivings?" Everyone should read the chapter headed, "A Private Letter," in which one of her students reveals something of his experiences with this occult preceptor. "On waking in the morning from a sleep so profound that the attitude of the previous night was still retained, I would vividly remember that I had gone, as it were, to H. P. B. I had been received in rooms which I could and did describe to those who lived with her. . . . She would receive me in varying fashion, showing me pictures which passed like panoramas across the walls of the room. There are but few that I could verbally describe, containing, as they do, methods of motion, of vibration, of the formation of a world from the first nucleolus, of "spirit-moulding matter" into form, of motion that was consciousness, and that was precipitated into my brain as a picture of a fact or a truth." We hear of many mystics who have awakened full of strange memories: perhaps this may give them a clue. The extracts here quoted will give some idea of the nature of the contents of this book. No student should be without it. As we read of this heroic soul with indomitable will working in a worn-out and diseased body, we arise full of reverence and gratitude. It was to her we owe what we can repay only in service to the cause—the re-awakening in our hearts of the antique ideals held by the Rishees of divine primeval truth, and the knowledge of the way to such attainment.

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LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

THE nature of all things near and dear to us, O King, is such that we must leave them, divide ourselves from them, separate ourselves from them. Pass not away, O King, with longing in thy heart. Sad is the death of him who longs, unworthy is the death of him who longs.—*Maha Sudassana Sutta.*

It is better to do one's own duty, even though devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

As the spider moving upward by his thread gains free space, thus also he who meditates, moving upward by the known word Om, gains independence.—*Upanishad.*

O man, thou thinkest thou art alone, and actest as thou likest. Thou dost not perceive the Eternal Love that dwells within thy heart. Whatever is done by thee, It sees and notes it all. The Soul is Its own witness, and is Its own refuge. It is the Supreme Eternal witness of man. Do not offend it.—*Mahabharata and Manu.*

The Wise guard the home of nature's order; they assume excellent forms in secret.—*Rig. Veda.*

Seek for one who has attained rest in the spirit, like the flame which has attained rest

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